

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-14 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-6 and 11-14 are allowed. Claims 7-10 are rejected.

Objection to Specification (Paragraph 1 of Office Action)

The disclosure is objected to by the Examiner because the Examiner's position is that the following phrase at page 11, line 20 is meaningless and thus confusing: "grain diameter of more than 200 μ m and 5mm or less." The objection to the disclosure is respectfully traversed. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are requested.

The phrase "grain diameter of more than 200 μ m and 5mm or less" has been amended to read as follows: "grain diameter in the range of greater than 200 μ m to 5mm." This range does not include the lower endpoint "200", but does include the upper endpoint "5." This amendment clearly does not narrow the scope of the disclosure but merely clarifies the language of the originally presented application.

In view of the amendments to the specification and the remarks hereinabove, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the disclosure are respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 7-10 Under 35 U.S.C. 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 7-10 are rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, for the reasons set forth in paragraph 2 of the Office Action. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are requested.

With respect claim 7, the Examiner states that the phrase "grain diameter of more than 200 μ m and 5mm or less" is confusing. In response, Applicants have amended this phrase to read as follows: "grain diameter in the range of greater than 200 μ m to 5mm." This amendment clearly does not narrow the scope of the claim but merely clarifies the language thereof.

In claim 8, the Examiner states that it is unclear what is meant by the phrase "naturally dropping." This phrase has been amended to read "dropping" [i.e. the term "naturally" has been deleted]. A similar amendment has been made to claim 9. These amendments clearly do not narrow the scope of the claims but merely clarify the language thereof. What is meant by the phrase "naturally dropping" or "dropping" is that droplets fall naturally by gravity without the application of other forces other than gravity in the direction of the gravitational forces.

The rejection of claims 9 and 10 should be overcome in view of the remarks hereinabove and in view of the above-mentioned amendments to claims 8 and 9.

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Accordingly, the rejection of claims 7-10 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, for the reasons set forth in paragraph 2 of the Office Action should be withdrawn by the Examiner.


Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Marc S. Weiner (Reg. No. 32,181) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 
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